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SUBJECT: U/S BURNS' JUNE 10 MEETING WITH FM BAKOYANNIS
FOCUSES ON KOSOVO, MACEDONIA, MIDDLE EAST

Classified By: CHARGE D'AFFAIRES THOMAS COUNTRYMAN. REASON 1.4 (B) AND (D).

1. (C) SUMMARY: In her June 10 meeting with U/S Burns, FM Bakoyannis focused on stability in the Balkans -- particularly G-8 discussion of Kosovo final status and GOG concerns regarding Macedonia's NATO entry. She favored additional negotiating time on Kosovo, adding that Greece sought both a UNSCR and a common EU position on independence.

Burns emphasized that any agreement on additional negotiations must include automaticity to ensure that, if negotiations failed, Kosovo's independence moved forward. On Macedonia, Burns told Bakoyannis that we would advise the GOM to "lower the temperature." He counseled patience on the question of Macedonia's NATO entry, pointing out that NATO would not begin its own considerations until late fall at the earliest. Bakoyannis briefed Burns on her upcoming travel to the Middle East; Burns previewed possible additional sanctions against Iran in future. Burns and Bakoyannis agreed that VWP remained perhaps the only real irritant in our bilateral relationship, but hoped that a visit by a DHS team would move the process forward. END SUMMARY.

BAKOYANNIS TRAVEL TO MIDDLE EAST

2. (C) Bakoyannis -- who was leaving shortly on a trip to Israel, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon -- told Under Secretary Burns that she hoped her visit could contribute to a positive meeting of the Quartet and Arab League on June 26. Burns pointed out that the Secretary also planned travel to the region in the next two weeks; we were particularly concerned about Fatah's position in Gaza. Bakoyannis agreed; Hamas was gaining strength. For that reason, funding for salaries and other results that ordinary people could feel were key. U/S Burns emphasized that the U.S. was dedicated to supporting Abu Mazen, but Abu Mazen also needed to continue contacts with Israeli PM Olmert. Bakoyannis agreed to support this recommendation with Abu Mazen.

3. (C) akoyanis ddedthatthe Syrians felt "insecure"asa reult f the UN Tribunal. Burns counted tht th Triunal was the right thing todo On Lbano, U/SBurns pointed out that th U.S hadexpeitedassistance to the Lebanese Armed Forces to assist PM Siniora's government. Bakoyannis believed that, while Siniora had enough money and military assistance, he still lacked political credibility. However, he could regain credibility if Israel would agree to place the Shaba'a Farms under UN Administration. That would remove one "draw" from Nasrahllah and give Siniora a victory. Burns noted that a decision on the Shaba'a farms would be difficult for Israel when it faced an ever-stronger Hezbollah presence in the south. Bakoyannis said she nevertheless planned to raise the proposal with Israeli FM Livni. On Iran, U/S Burns stated that absent progress on proliferation, the USG would press for a third UNSCR. Given Chinese and Russian interests, however, it was important that European countries prepare to take sanctions beyond those called for by the UNSCR.

KOSOVO: THE RUSSIA FACTOR

4. (C) Burns updated Bakoyannis on the Kosovo state-of-play. At the G8, there was unity among G7 FMs ahead of the Summit, but Russia had balked despite the fact that was not contributing to the mission in Kosovo. At the end of the day, Burns emphasized, automaticity was what counted. Burns confirmed that he would focus discussions on this point, and the need not to let Russia delay the process, when he met his &Quint8 counterparts in Paris on June 13.

5. (C) Bakoyannis said she had a long talk with Russian FM Lavrov before the G8. He believes, she said, that the new government in Serbia would be more constructive. Russia

"would not be more Serbian than the Serbs," but would be prepared to veto in the UNSC. Bakoyannis admitted that the Europeans were not united on what to do absent UN agreement providing a new legal framework. For its part, the GOG needed both a UNSCR and a common EU position. If an additional six month negotiating period was on offer, "we should take it" and try to get an agreement with Tadic and Kostunica. Ceku might also use the opportunity to give additional assurances to the Serbian minority.

16. (C) Burns pointed out that the burden was on Serbia to negotiate seriously. The U.S. was prepared to agree to a short delay on status, but only if it brought a result at the end. Bakoyannis questioned whether the Kosovars would really negotiate seriously; Burns responded that the UN SYG would use his authority to make it happen. In the past, it was the Serbs who had not been serious, walking away from the process.

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17. (C) Burns added that circumstances might lead to an alternate UNSCR or process in which the U.S. and EU agreed on Kosovo independence. Even without a UNSCR, we needed a way to get an EU civilian presence on the ground. NATO did not need a UNSCR; it could remain without one. Bakoyannis pressed for the international community to use the additional time to negotiate; while not bowing to Russian pressure, it was important to use "kid gloves" in dealing with the region.

MACEDONIA

18. (C) On Macedonia, Bakoyannis cited a newspaper survey showing that 62 percent of Greeks wanted the government to veto Macedonia's NATO accession, even if it entered as FYROM. That was the electoral reality. 42 New Democracy MPs agreed with that line; Bakoyannis would brief the Parliament June 14 and wanted to avoid any parliamentary decision prior to the Greek elections which would box the government in even further. The government had tried to keep the issue out of Greek politics, but the GOM's actions were not helping. Greece was Skopje's largest investor, but some businessmen were now questioning whether they should continue that investment. Bakoyannis stressed that her goal when she entered office was to improve relations with Skopje, but the GOM's irredentist policy made that impossible: "it takes two to tango." Bakoyannis told Burns that the GOM had three times sent "private" messages to PM Karamanlis that it would change the name of the airport, but no action had been taken. Changing the name would cool Greek public opinion and allow the GOG to agree to Macedonia's NATO entry as FYROM provided it met NATO's criteria. But, Bakoyannis argued, the GOG would also need some reassurance that the GOM would not change its name in the Alliance immediately after entry.

19. (C) U/S Burns assured Bakoyannis that we understood Greek sensitivities, and understood that the new Macedonian PM had taken unhelpful decisions. We were prepared to work privately to get the GOM to lower the temperature, and would do so. He had personally told Crvenkoski that Macedonia must work with Greece. The U.S. continued to support UN mediator Nimitz's efforts to resolve the issue. On the question of NATO entry, U/S Burns urged patience. NATO had not begun its formal consideration of candidates, and would not do so until November/December at the earliest. Between now and then, the Macedonian government needed to focus on reforms necessary to meet NATO entry criteria -- a message President Bush had already emphasized. Both sides need to calm the rhetoric, and we will push Macedonia to negotiate seriously and to show more sensitivity.

VWP AND THE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP

10. (C) Burns affirmed President Bush's message on the Visa Waiver Program, noting the complexities of the security environment. A delegation from the Department of Homeland Security would meet with GOG officials this week in Athens, and report back to other Washington agencies on the steps Greece has taken to meet criteria for participation. But given current debate in Congress over whether to add countries to the program now or wait until new legislation (with new requirements) had been completed, getting Congressional support was also important.

11. (C) Burns and Bakoyannis agreed that VWP was perhaps the last contentious issue in our bilateral relationship. Bakoyannis emphasized that there were many issues on which the U.S. and Greece could work together constructively; this was also true of U.S.-EU relations. Bakoyannis added that -- over the long term -- Greece also saw Russia as an ally. The

GOG and Russia had a lot of common enemies; it was in Greece's strategic interest to have a strong relationship with them. Burns pointed out that -- despite President Putin's provocative rhetoric regarding the U.S. -- our response to date had been low-key. It was important nonetheless to bear in mind Russian pressure on Estonia, Georgia, and Moldova.

GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS

12. (C) Bakoyannis told Burns that the GOG's goal was to keep tensions with Turkey low, particularly given the pre-election period in Turkey. Overflights continued, but she hoped that Turkey would respect the summer moratorium agreed last year. Burns briefed Bakoyannis on USG thinking about possible Turkish cross-border operations into Iraq, stressing U.S. General Ralston's engagement with the GOT. COUNTRYMAN